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NEWS RELEASE

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Paul J. McNulty, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Virginia, announced the plea today of Maher Amin Jaradat, a 43-year-old Israeli-born Palestinian and naturalized U.S. citizen, to fraudulently procuring U.S. citizenship. He faces a maximum sentence of 10 years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine when sentenced on September 2, 2005, by the Honorable T.S. Ellis III, United States District Court Judge.

On May 17, 2005, a federal grand jury in Alexandria returned a one-count indictment charging Jaradat with unlawful procurement of citizenship. Jaradat entered the United States in June 1988 as a visitor and later married an American citizen.

Jaradat submitted an application for U.S. citizenship with immigration authorities in March 1995 and, in June 1995 appeared before immigration authorities where he swore under oath that the contents of the application were true, even though he knew the application contained false statements.

He also failed to disclose that he had been a member of the Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP) for 16 months beginning in 1980; that he had also studied bomb-making and the use of small arms at a training camp in Syria run by DFLP, an organization involved in terrorist activities; and that he had engaged in security duties in Lebanon.

Jaradat also did not disclose that, beginning in 1981, he had also been a member of al-Fatah, an organization responsible for numerous terrorist attacks and airplane hijackings

In addition, Jaradat falsely claimed that he had never been arrested, cited, charged, indicted, convicted, fined or imprisoned for breaking or violating any law or ordinance, when in fact, he had been arrested for assault and battery in the City of Alexandria in 1990.

This case was investigated by FBI and ICE special agents assigned to the Joint Terrorism Task Force. The prosecution is being handled by Assistant United States Attorney Gordon Kromberg and Special Assistant Heather Schmidt.

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